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## Despite shortage of officers, some colleges shun ROTC

*An effort to start a program at Wartburg has been unsuccessful.*

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Some private colleges in Iowa and across the nation are stonewalling military training programs when officers are needed most, officials say.

University of Northern Iowa recruiters want to spread the school's Army Reserve Officer Training Corps unit to Wartburg College, a private Lutheran school 10 miles away in Waverly. Wartburg faculty who decide academic policy rejected the program last year and denied recruiters the chance to make another pitch this year.

"At a time when our nation is attacked, there's a strong calling to serve," said Lt. Col. Michael DePuglio, commander of UNI's Army ROTC program. "Students should have the opportunity to serve their country."

A handful of frustrated Wartburg students have abandoned the private school for UNI.

The controversy boils down to politics and religion, Wartburg faculty say.

A "don't ask, don't tell" policy forbids gays to serve openly in the military, which violates a Wartburg edict against

sexual discrimination, said Ferol Menzel, Wartburg's vice president of academic affairs. Other faculty harbor anti-war sentiments rooted in either their personal beliefs or the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, she said.

"I think there were some faculty who lived through the Vietnam War and believe as a college of the church, we should send a message of peace, and they couldn't vote for this official relationship with the military," Menzel said.

ROTC programs have survived at several Lutheran colleges, including Capital University in Columbus, Ohio.

Capital University's ROTC unit has been strong since the 1950s, "when people appreciated the military," said Tom Moe, a 1965 alumnus, 30-year military veteran and former commander of an ROTC unit at the University of Notre Dame.

"A university, a place of learning, is totally going against its charter and duty to exclude a point of view," he said.

The issue runs as far and wide as the 270 colleges and universities that produce U.S. military officers.

ROTC programs have been dropped at Harvard University and other private colleges, said Paul Kotakis, spokesman for the U.S. Army Cadet Command in Fort Monroe, Va. At the same time, the U.S. Army has been several hundred officers short of its 3,800 annual goal in recent years.

UNI recruiters are allowed to woo Wartburg students, who receive academic credit for military classes taken elsewhere. But students must pay UNI tuition on top of the more than \$16,000 a year they pay Wartburg. A minor in military science doesn't show up on the Wartburg diploma.

That was enough to drive out Cory Goodall. The former Wartburg student athlete transferred to UNI this fall.

"All I've wanted to do is become an officer," said Goodall, 20, a sophomore from Delmar.

Wartburg student leaders have asked UNI's ROTC recruiters to give a presentation in a few weeks, said Matt McNamara, Wartburg's student body president.

"I think it's something we need to explore," McNamara said.

If student leaders asked the faculty for a change of heart, "we would listen to what they have to say," Menzel said.

ROTC classes and offices would stay at UNI's Cedar Falls campus under the UNI recruiters' proposal. The classes and UNI faculty who teach them would become part of the Wartburg curriculum and faculty. Drake University and Iowa State University have a similar agreement.

Accepting the military classes as Wartburg's would clash with faculty support of nondiscrimination and nonviolent forms of conflict resolution, Menzel said.

"I know there are groups of people, particularly veterans, who feel this was a vote that was not in support of the military. I don't think that's accurate. We certainly know and understand that . . . we wouldn't be where we are today without the military."